

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-21 as being inadvertently duplicative of corresponding claims in co-owned U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/451,478 filed November 30, 2000, of which the present application is a division.

Please substitute for former claims 1-21 (cancelled above) the following new claims 22-33:

22. A composite ion exchange membrane comprising:
a stripped porous polymer film; and
an ion exchange polymer at least partially
filling the porosity of the film.

23. The membrane of claim 22 wherein the film is microporous.

24. The membrane of claim 22 wherein the film comprises a polyalkene.

25. The membrane of claim 24 wherein the polyalkene is selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, polypropylene, polyvinylidene, polyvinylidene halides, and copolymers thereof.

26. The membrane of claim 24 wherein the polyalkene is selected from the group consisting of

polyethylene, polypropylene, and ethylene-propylene copolymers.

27. The membrane of claim 24 wherein the polyalkene is polyethylene.

28. The membrane of claim 24 wherein the polyalkene is ultra-high molecular weight polyethylene.

29. The membrane of claim 22 wherein the ion exchange polymer comprises an α,β,β -trifluorostyrenic monomer.

30. The membrane of claim 22 wherein the film is at least partially impregnated with a liquid composition of the ion exchange polymer.

31. The membrane of claim 30 wherein the ion exchange polymer comprises an α,β,β -trifluorostyrenic monomer.

32. The membrane of claim 22, further comprising a solid particulate partially filling the porosity of the film.

33. The membrane of claim 22 wherein the membrane is substantially gas impermeable.